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ACTION AF-00

INFO LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DINT-00	DODE-00
DATE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
AC-01	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00
PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/008W

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0286
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003410

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR CHARLES NEARY
NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/15/11

TAGS: PGOV PINR ZI
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE: FEW CHANGES EXPECTED AT UPCOMING
ZANU-PF CONFERENCE

CLASSIFIED BY POLOFF TODD C. FAULK FOR REASONS: 1.5 (B)
AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: THE ZIMBABWE RULING PARTY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 13-16 IN VICTORIA FALLS. NO MAJOR CHANGES IN THE ZANU-PF LEADERSHIP ARE EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED, AND THE CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO REAFFIRM PRESIDENT MUGABE AS THE PARTY'S CANDIDATE FOR NEXT YEAR'S ELECTION. OUR INTERLOCUTORS TELL US THAT THE DATES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WILL PROBABLY NOT BE ANNOUNCED UNTIL AFTER ZANU-PF WRAPS UP ITS ANNUAL DOG AND PONY SHOW. END SUMMARY.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN THE WORKS

12. (C) FRED SHAVA, ZANU-PF'S DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION, CONFIRMED WITH POLOFF ON NOVEMBER 13 THAT ZANU-PF'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN VICTORIA FALLS DECEMBER 13-16. ABOUT 7,000 DELEGATES REPRESENTING ALL 10 PROVINCES (THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS WILL SELECT THEIR DELEGATES OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS) WILL BE ASSEMBLED UNDER A GIGANTIC TENT ON THE GOLF COURSE OF A LOCAL RESORT. HARARE DIPLOMATS WILL BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE OPENING CEREMONY -- LIKELY TO BE HELD DECEMBER 14, A DAY AFTER REGISTRATION IS COMPLETED -- AND EMBASSIES SHOULD RECEIVE THEIR INVITATIONS BY THE END OF THE MONTH, THE DIRECTOR NOTED. SHAVA DESCRIBED THE CONFERENCE AS THE PARTY'S ANNUAL "MANAGEMENT REVIEW," WHICH IS DIFFERENT FROM A FIVE-YEAR CONGRESS. A CONGRESS IS TASKED WITH ELECTING THE PARTY'S 280-

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MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHEREAS NO LEADERSHIP CHANGES CAN BE MADE AT A CONFERENCE, SHAVA ASSERTED. DEPUTY JUSTICE MINISTER PAUL MANGWANA TOLD POLOFF NOVEMBER 1 THAT IT IS AGAINST ZANU-PF'S CONSTITUTION TO CHANGE THE PARTY LEADERSHIP OUTSIDE OF A FIVE-YEAR CONGRESS. CHANGES IN THE POLITBURO WERE MADE AT LAST YEAR'S CONGRESS ONLY BECAUSE THE PARTY CONSTITUTION HAD BEEN CHANGED TO PERMIT IT. (NOTE: LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL GATHERING QUALIFIED AS A "SPECIAL" CONGRESS TO CONCLUDE UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM 1999'S FIVE-YEAR CONGRESS. END NOTE.) WHEN ASKED ABOUT THIS YEAR'S AGENDA, SHAVA COYLY REMARKED THAT IT HAS NOT COME OUT YET, BUT SAID A "REAFFIRMATION" OF MUGABE'S CANDIDACY FOR NEXT YEAR'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS LIKELY.

A FEW LAST-MINUTE ADJUSTMENTS?

13. (C) THE OCTOBER 26 EDITION OF THE "ZIMBABWE INDEPENDENT" CLAIMED THAT THE ZANU-PF POLITBURO WILL BE EXPANDED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BRING IN MORE HELP FOR THE ELECTION. THE ARTICLE CLAIMED THAT THE COMMISSARIAT, WHICH DIRECTS ELECTION EFFORTS, WILL BE EXPANDED WITH TWO NEW DEPUTY SECRETARIES, INFORMATION MINISTER JONATHAN MOYO WILL HEAD A NEW INFORMATION,

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND COMMISSARIAT SUB-COMMITTEE, AND NICHOLAS GOCHE WILL DIRECT A NEW TRANSPORT AND SECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE. IDEN WETHERELL, EDITOR OF THE "INDEPENDENT," TOLD POLOFF NOVEMBER 6 THAT NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR MUGABE TO REDUCE THE POLITBURO OR PUNISH ENEMIES WITHIN THE PARTY -- HE NEEDS ALL THE HELP HE CAN

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GET. THE ZANU-PF POLITBURO NOW FUNCTIONS AS THE NATION'S CABINET -- THE REAL CABINET, IN MUGABE'S VIEW, IS FILLED WITH "WEAKLINGS AND LIGHTWEIGHTS" -- AND IT WILL BE EXPANDED TO MEET THE ELECTORAL CHALLENGE AHEAD, WETHERELL OPINED.

14. (C) IN SPEAKING TO ACTING PARTY COMMISSAR SIKHANYISO NDLOVU ON NOVEMBER 8, POLOFFS LEARNED THAT MUGABE PROBABLY WILL APPOINT A NEW COMMISSAR AT THE ZANU-PF CONFERENCE, BUT NDLOVU REFUSED TO SPECULATE WHETHER IT WOULD BE HIM. WHEN ASKED IF NEW YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MINISTER ELLIOT MANYIKA WAS FAVORED FOR THE KEY POST, NDLOVU SAID HE WAS A POSSIBILITY. WITH A TOUCH OF BITTERNESS, THE ACTING COMMISSAR COMPLAINED ABOUT WORKING FOR FORMER COMMISSAR BORDER GEZI, WHO DIED IN AN APRIL CAR ACCIDENT. HE DESCRIBED GEZI AS UNEDUCATED AND IMMATURE. NDLOVU NOTED THAT HE WAS NOW CONDUCTING A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF ZIMBABWE'S DEMOGRAPHICS TO LEARN WHICH AREAS AND GROUPS ARE BEST TO TARGET FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THE JUNE 2000 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WERE RUN BASED ON THE OUTDATED 1992 CENSUS, BUT THAT MISTAKE WOULD NOT BE MADE THIS TIME, HE ASSURED US.

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ELECTION DATE STILL A MYSTERY
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15. (C) WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE TIMING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, DIRECTOR SHAVA STATED THAT IT WAS "ENTIRELY UP TO THE PRESIDENT'S DISCRETION." HE REFUSED TO ELABORATE ON WHEN THE DATE MIGHT BE ANNOUNCED, STATING THAT THE WINDOW FOR THE ELECTION WAS WELL-DEFINED BY THE CONSTITUTION. SHAVA THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT IT IS WITHIN THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO DELAY AN ELECTION, AND EFFECTIVELY EXTEND HIS TENURE, IF THE COUNTRY IS AT WAR, THERE IS A NATURAL DISASTER THAT PREVENTS VOTERS FROM GOING TO THE POLLS, OR A STATE OF EMERGENCY IS DECLARED. IDEN WETHERELL REMARKED THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE MUGABE WILL ANNOUNCE THE ELECTION DATE DURING THE ZANU-PF CONFERENCE BECAUSE HE "DOESN'T WANT TO PUT ALL HIS CARDS ON THE TABLE." INSTEAD, HE WILL WAIT AS LONG AS LEGALLY POSSIBLE. MUGABE WILL STAND FOR RE-ELECTION, THE EDITOR OFFERED, BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT IS CONVINCED THAT HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SEE "THE REVOLUTION" THROUGH. NDLOVU TOLD US A MARCH DATE HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED TO THE PRESIDENT BUT THAT MUGABE HAS NOT YET MADE A DECISION.

COMMENT

16. (C) THIS YEAR'S ZANU-PF CONFERENCE IS SHAPING UP TO BE AN EVEN BIGGER NON-EVENT THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS. GONE ARE EVEN THE USUAL RUMORS OF WHOLESALE CHANGES IN THE PARTY LEADERSHIP OR "YOUNG TURK" REVOLTS. ZANU-PF MEMBERS APPEAR RESIGNED TO THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF
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MUGABE AT THE HELM AND ARE STAKING THEIR POLITICAL FUTURES ON HIS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY. ALTHOUGH A FEW MINOR RESHUFFLES OR ADDITIONS TO THE POLITBURO MAY OCCUR -- ELLIOT MANYIKA LOOKS LIKE A SHOE-IN FOR PARTY COMMISSAR -- MUGABE IS UNLIKELY TO CHANGE TACK SO NEAR THE END OF THE RACE, EVEN IF THE BOAT IS TAKING ON WATER. THE CONFERENCE WILL LIKELY SERVE AS ANOTHER AVENUE FOR THE PRESIDENT TO WHIP UP SUPPORT FOR HIS LAND PROGRAM AND TO REENERGIZE THE PARTY FAITHFUL. END COMMENT.

SULLIVAN

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